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Hitler's missing psychiatric file

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Sirs: The recent 60 years anniversary of the end of World War II and the Nazi regime may be reason for a short psychiatric-historical note to point out a frequently overlooked detail of Hitler's life—his hidden psychiatric biography. Besides his extreme anti-semitism, mentally ill were among the most threatened individuals with some 200,000 being killed [1, 3]. This was made public during World War II by the Muenster cardinal Galen who most recently was beatified by pope Benedikt XVI. While Hitler's late Parkinson disease has attracted some attention [4, 8], his former functional 'hysterical' blindness is almost unknown. In fact on 14th October 1918 Hitler, who served as a private in World War I, survived a mustard gas attack in Belgium near Ypern. There are some reports that he consecutively had a

mild resultant conjunctivitis [2, 7]. He also suffered from nonorganic blindness [7]. His further treatment is nearly unknown. Hitler was transferred to the military hospital in Pasewalk near Stettin/Baltic sea. Prof. Forster, chair at that psychiatric clinic, treated him by using hypnosis [5, 6]. Hitler was discharged on 19th November 1918 and never mentioned this period again. His treatment is proven by eyewitness of Dr. Karl Kroner who later reported the facts to the US intelligence Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Hitler's file disappeared and all people who were closely involved or had special knowledge of this file were killed by the 'Gestapo', including Prof. Forster who probably was forced to commit suicide on 9th November 1933 [10]. Before that he succeeded in presenting these documents to exile writers in Paris where his brother was employed at the German embassy. The German Jewish writer Ernst Weiss, a physician himself, used the original documents in his novel 'Der Augenzeuge' (The Eyewitness, [9]) before he committed suicide during the German occupation of Paris on 6th May 1940. The original file is lost but for all we know Hitler had a psychiatric history, which may not explain his savage ideas but throws an inter-

esting light on his anti-psychiatric attitude [11].

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